

Biden

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acceptance of the nomination Thursday. The focus Wednesday was on Clinton's national security resume as secretary of state and U.S. senator. That was in contrast to the first two days that looked at her efforts to help families, children and women.

Biden, in an emotionally charged 20-minute speech, condemned Donald Trump's framing of America as a broken country, saying the GOP nominee is wrong for the nation and its future.

"We've had candidates before who attempted to get elected by appealing to our fears, but they have never succeeded, because we do not scare easily," Biden declared as his speech barrelled towards its fiery conclusion. "We never break, we never bend, no, we endure, we overcome, and we always, always move forward."

Biden asked the crowd not to cheer or boo for a moment and listen to his "deadly serious" message. And the arena fell silent.

"No major party nominee in this history of this nation has ever known less or been less prepared to deal with our national security," he said.

But when Biden spoke of how he has "never been more optimistic," and said he believes "the 21st century will be the American century," the crowd roared. At one point, it broke into chants of USA! USA!

"He ignited this place," said Delaware delegate Erik Raser-Schramm. "Joe took us on an emotional journey from happy to sad to angry and fired up. Amazing."

The prime-time speech was a visible effort to mend discord at both the upper echelon and front lines of the Democratic Party, which now faces a bruising battle against Trump.

Democrats hoping the four-day convention would display total party unity have been disappointed to see shoutdowns from frustrated supporters of one-time primary opponent U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders, of Vermont, who feel silenced by the party establishment.

Protests erupted outside the Wells Fargo Center, and some Sanders delegates walked off the floor Tuesday as Clinton was formally nominated in a roll call vote.

Supporters of the Vermont senator have pointed to leaked Democratic National Committee emails that show party officials seeking to help Clinton defeat Sanders in the nomination process. Party Chairwoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz resigned.

In an interview with The News Journal before the speech, the vice president said Democrats have to remember their base — working-class and minority voters — and fold in Sanders supporters by tackling income inequality head on.

"Bernie is absolutely right in speaking what eats at my core," he said, acknowledging the internal-party fighting that has become a reoccurring issue.

He said all Democrats need to push for



Vice President Joe Biden and his wife, Jill Biden, wave to the crowd after his speech during the third day of the Democratic National Convention at the Wells Fargo Center in Philadelphia on Wednesday night.

change in some of the issues Sanders supporters care about, like income inequality. He also urged Democrats to seek tax breaks for the wealthy for funding free community college for students, a focus of Clinton in recent months, and reiterated the importance of brokering compromise across party lines, noting that lawmakers have fewer opportunities to travel in bipartisan coalitions and dine with one another in the Senate dining room to learn more about their colleagues and their families, as he did when he was a senator.

"It's the Delaware way. We've always gotten along," he said at McGillin's Olde Ale House in Center City Philadelphia, where he also appeared on the MSNBC program "Morning Joe" and met with Delaware delegates.

Biden also used the pre-speech discussion to target Trump, who for much of Wednesday nearly dominated the news cycle and seemed to zap the focus away from the Democrats' celebration in South Philadelphia.

The Republican nominee, during a press conference in Florida, said Russia would get access to and release thousands of emails that had been deleted from the private computer server Clinton used as secretary of state, a contentious topic that has become an ongoing campaign issue and subject of a federal investigation.

Later, in Biden's hometown of Scranton, Pennsylvania, Trump said he would not be quiet during the convention.

"Well, guess what, folks — we're campaigning," said Trump, who won Delaware's GOP primary in April. "Because we're going to make America great again, folks."

On Wednesday morning, before the comments were made, the vice president

said Trump "knows nothing about foreign policy," adding that he and foreign leaders are worried by the prospect of him being elected.

"The things he says absolutely make no sense," Biden said.

The speech reflected a complicated political relationship between Clinton and Biden, who worked together in the U.S. Senate and became political rivals in the 2008 Democratic primary, trading barbs during debates on foreign policy issues. Biden left the race after a poor finish in the Iowa caucuses, and Clinton followed months later after struggling to gain traction against Obama.

He was introduced Wednesday by his wife, Jill Biden, and a video about his accomplishments, followed by the theme of "Rocky" and chants from the crowd of "Joe, Joe, Joe."

The vice president's speech was part of a day that had the Democrats focusing on their theme of diversity, with addresses by rising stars like California Lt. Gov. Gavin Newsom and party stalwarts including Senate Democratic Leader Harry Reid and former Defense Secretary and CIA Director Leon Panetta, who worked with Clinton in the Obama cabinet. The day also marked the introduction of Clinton running mate Virginia Sen. Tim Kaine on the national political stage.

Kaine spoke a portion of the speech Spanish, calling Clinton a "soul mate."

"We share this belief: Do all the good you can. Serve one another. That's what I'm about. That's what you're about. That's what Bernie Sanders is about. That's what Joe Biden is about. That's what Barack and Michelle Obama are about. And that's what Hillary Clinton is about."

Obama entered the stage after a video about the challenges of being president

and the importance of optimism. The following speech touched on some of the same themes Obama used in his Democratic National Convention address of 2004, when as a low-ranking Senate candidate from Chicago he urged a new approach to politics and less divisive rhetoric that divides the nation. He famously said that there is no black or white America, but we "we are one people."

"America is already great. America is already strong," he said Wednesday. "And I promise you, our strength, our greatness, does not depend on Donald Trump."

He also pointed to Clinton's choice in Kaine.

"He will be a great vice president, and he'll make Hillary a better president. Just like my dear friend and brother Joe Biden has made me a better president," Obama said.

The speeches by Obama and Joe Biden amounted to a symbolic passing of the Democratic mantle to the Clinton-Kaine ticket. The vice president's office said he has attended all but one Democratic National Convention since 1972, and it is likely Wednesday's address is among the last in front of a nationally televised audience.

"He's our homeboy," convention superdelegate and House Majority Leader Valerie Longhurst said, recalling how Biden campaigned with her outside a Bear Acme during her first run. "He takes care of us and we take care of him."

Sean Finnegan, another delegate, said he was "incredibly proud" watching Biden's speech and meeting with him in the morning.

"He thanked us for allowing him the opportunity to serve the people of Delaware, and the reality is that we want to thank Joe for taking us on this amazing ride," Finnegan said. "The reality is that we want to thank Joe for taking us on this amazing ride."

Asked about his plans post-vice presidency earlier Wednesday, Joe Biden said that he plans to maintain a strong presence in Delaware after he leaves office. He said he will hire an impressive team to support his advocacy on cancer research collaboration, women's rights and access to affordable education. He's also been approached by many members of the party to continue campaigning and fundraising for candidates.

"This is the only thing I've ever done that I cared about," Biden said of his more than four decades of public service. "I can't fathom retirement."

Joe Biden said the Democrats are more united than what has played out on television. He cited no qualms about serving as a surrogate for the Clinton campaign, despite concerns about the presidential hopeful's trustworthiness.

"Everything she's ever said, she's done," he said of his professional relationship with the former secretary of state. "The measure of a public servant is do they believe what they say, does their life work reflect" that.

"I'm more hopeful for the prospect of America than I've ever been," he said.

The Associated Press and Nicole Gaudiano of USA Today contributed.